1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Saramacca

demanded more knowledge of the sources of the slaves who compose the Negro ancestry of the American Negroes than was available. This knowledge, which historical documents do not give us, was, therefore, to be sought in a comparison of Negro cultures in the New World and in Africa.

As the research was continued, moreover, it became apparent that the scientific problem of the Negro in the New World held implications of larger significance, and that the history of the Negro in the New World has constituted a vast "laboratory" experiment in the processes of racial mixture and of cultural contacts. The Negroes who were brought to the New World came of various West African stocks, and here they mingled their blood with the English, the French, the Dutch, with the Danish, Spanish, and Portuguese who became their masters, and they absorbed in varying degrees the culture of these masters. At the same time, they came in contact with aboriginal Indian peoples with whom they also mingled. But the Negro has not only absorbed; he has also given. The conclusion, still held by many students, that the Negro slave came to this country a savage child with or without his loin cloth, and as naked culturally as he was sartorially, is one which cannot today be accepted.

At the beginning of our field work in Suriname, one of us went up the Suriname River to study the Bush Negroes, and the other remained in Paramaribo to collect folk lore from the town Negroes and to ascertain what Africanisms could be discerned in their beliefs and behavior. When we met and compared notes, some striking things came to light, for bush and town Negroes were, as the evidence in hand suggested, much more closely allied culturally than had been realized, while both were seen to have many aspects of culture that clearly link them with West African and other New World Negroes.

Thus, in bush and town, the Negroes hold the same concept and offer the same explanations of the soul and

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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PREFACE

its influence on the life of man, and both employ the word *akra* for soul, a word used on the Gold Coast of Africa exactly as it is in Guiana. The day names associated with the soul are Gold Coast day names, known in Jamaica and heard in the United States, as well. In the bush the Saramacca people are "possessed" by the gods and by *obia;* in the town the Negroes are "possessed" by *winti*, a word meaning wind, and the use of wind as a euphemism for the gods is common in Dahomey and Ashanti. Many of the gods of both bush and town are the same, and they are African gods, invoked today in Nigeria, in Dahomey, in Togo, in Ashanti, and invoked also in the islands of the Caribbean. *Nyankompon*, the Bush Negro name for the Sky God, is the Gold Coast name. The Maroons of Jamaica know this deity under the same designation. *Dagowe* is a snake god in the Suriname bush and in town—the Haitians and Dahomeans dance to the same snake god, whom they call *Dangbe*. In West Africa the silk-cotton and *loko* trees are sacred. In the Saramacca villages and in the town of Parimaribo they are sacred as well, and the names are Dahomean names, known also in Haiti. In bush and town the people dance to the river gods, as do the Negroes in Africa and the Caribbean, and the pattern of the ceremonies has been preserved in part in Negro baptismal rites in the United States. Bush and town invoke the buzzard, *Opete*, so named in Ashanti, and sacred everywhere in West Africa, and the style of dancing resembles certain of the dances of the "saints" who "shout" in the Negro Sanctified Churches of the United States.

Between bush and town there is, however, this difference—the bush is Africa of the seventeenth century. In West Africa today, for example, the roof of thatch has almost everywhere given way to the white man's metal roofing. In Dahomey, where thatch is still found, we discovered a strip of wall made of woven palm fronds, such as is found on the Saramacca, in a village which had been enslaved by the Dahomean kings in the early seventeenth century and had remained enslaved until the conquest

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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of the Dahomean kingdom by the French. All other walls are of swish. Today in West Africa the automobile and sewing machine have found their way into remote corners. But more important still than these changes wrought by European civilizations, which have made inroads chiefly on the material life of the Africans, are those resulting from intertribal wars, which followed the introduction of guns and gunpowder into Africa and which helped to establish the great West African dynasties. The result of the conquest of one native people by another was constant cultural interstimulation which made for changes in the indigenous civilizations.

In the Guiana bush, however, where these runaway Negroes and their descendants have been living, the fortunes of African kingdoms, the cultural contacts that have affected the Africans, have not touched their own tribal destinies. Neither has the civilization of the white man nor that of the Indian introduced basic changes into their manner of living or thinking.

There are no roads in the Guiana bush, and what footpaths exist to connect one village with another are difficult to follow and, moreover, are not for the stranger, whether he be white or mulatto. For such as these the highway is the river, with native paddlers alert in their surveillance of a stranger's activities. The old men on the river have made a tradition of recalling the struggle of the ancestors for freedom and survival, and it is not without significance that one of the three worst crimes among the Bush Negroes—one that ranks with incest and murder—is informing on a Negro to a white man.

In contrast with this isolation of the Bush Negroes, the Negroes of Paramaribo have known close contact with the whites, with Carib and Arawak Indians, and in more recent years with the Hindu and Javanese laborers brought to the colony. Only suggestions of the manner in which the beliefs of town and bush correspond or differ can be included here, since this account concerns itself with the Saramacca people. Yet for the understanding of this study it must be

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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REBEL DESTINY

764 [539] "On the sacred apinti drum we speak to the spirit; we tell it we go to dig the grave." So the drum spoke. From the shore we could see five figures in the small corial, and, as they came closer, we saw also the drum, the food the men carried, and the muddy hoe. They would do this the next day and the next, for to dig a grave takes a long time.

I

795 769 ●171 Although separated by many generations from their African places of origin, the Bush Negroes of Dutch Guiana have held to the traditions and beliefs of their aboriginal home. In the Suriname bush, as in Africa, the responsibility which an individual bears toward his social group does not end with death. His clan, his village, and his family look to him, when he has joined the spirits of his ancestors, to protect them against the magic of their enemies, to help them in time of drought or pestilence, and at all times to intercede for them with the gods.

As in Africa, the spirit of the dead is powerful for good or evil, and the rites of death must be carried out as tradition demands, so that the dead man may feel he has received honor among the living and proper introduction to the world of the dead. As in Africa, we found that the 764 171 first care for the dead is to place the body on the central portion of a broken canoe; that rum and tobacco are included in the water with which the body is washed; that in washing the dead, the back must not be touched; that the number of those who wash the body must not be [801] an even one—five is the number preferred, though three persons are used, and seven; that those chosen must not be young, for it takes age and the knowledge of controlling the spirits which age brings to approach the dead without suffering harm.

764 While the body lies in the open house of the dead, relatives and the village elders are in attendance on the spirit night and day. It is they who all night tell stories about the trickster, spider Anansi, to amuse the spirit, and they who play traditional games. The dances begin when

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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of him from whom it had dropped. The same belief in the identification of the essence of one's being with any part of one's body which actuates so many primitive peoples, and is so characteristic of West Africa, exists among the Bush Negroes. It is for this reason that when an African or a Bush Negro dies away from home some of his hair and nail parings are sent to his native village for ceremonial burial. And it is for this reason, too, that for three mornings we saw the party of five young men go out from Gankwe to dig the grave of Sedefo's brother and heard the drum's invocation,

Osio tintin
Osio be'e dyo.

2

The night was still and dark. The natives said the moon was dead and this was the time for the dances to the river gods, but since there was a death in Gankwe all the gods might be danced to, for in times of important rituals, like death or the breaking of mourning or harvest festivals, it was not necessary to wait for the day sacred to each god to dance.

"They dance well at Gankwe," said our informant, as he sat by, and then after listening for a few moments he added, "They're dancing already."

We, too, walked out on the path to listen, and gradually we separated the sound of the falls above our camp from what seemed like the pulse of the night itself.

"It doesn't boom, does it?" we asked each other, remembering the accounts of impressionable travelers.

Soon Sedefo himself appeared and another, and we started for Gankwe.

"*Waka koni*, Sedefo," called our host at camp as we put off. He was evidently uneasy about us and asked the paddlers to be careful, for it is not safe on the river at night with the rapids below and the spirits that hover about.

The paddles cut the water so soundlessly that it did seem as if the spirits were carrying the boat downstream.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Bayo laughed. "All this isn't easy, white man. A line about this curve shows this to be a man-child. These are things bush people alone know."

The decorated rim of this tray had interested many who had seen the piece the winter before, and we had had pointed out to us what we ourselves had remarked, that the design was not continuous all around, but that it was divided into four parts, the crosshatched portion alternating with that of checkered squares. Did those have meaning? we asked Bayo.

"Ai, these belong to the women and the children. The small lines are the hair of the children, and the squares here that of the women." The brass-headed nails he touched one by one on the photograph. "The women have nice kamemba," he said, at last.

On the upper river we had acquired another tray with similar motifs, but more elaborately decorated, with carvings on the outer surface as well as the inner, and also with many more brass-headed nails. This use of nails, which was more general in the deep interior, had at first seemed an anomaly, for they must come from the white man's city, since the Bush Negro, we knew, had lost the African technique of iron working. But as we saw more deeply into their customs, we recognized that these nails studding the carvings represented a survival of the African art tradition, and it was, therefore, reasonable that in the deep interior they should be found more profusely on the carvings.

Human representations outlined with the realism of African masks we almost never met, and the exceptional instances suggested only resemblances. The mask itself, as far as we could learn, was not used in their dances. The men knew what masks were, but whether this knowledge came as part of their African tradition, or whether it was brought from the city and the French shore, we could not determine. The African style of depicting the human form had, however, not been entirely lost by their slave ancestors. In this village of Ma'lobbi, where lived one of the finest carvers on the river, the carving over a doorway held us

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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532 fascinated. It showed, in its purest form, the retention of the African mask-like head. Sometimes on the prow of a boat we would see in cruder form the outlines of a mask, and once an old woman came with a food stirrer to us. Its handle ended in a knob which with a few strokes of the knife had been formed into a double representation of the human [191] head, a perfect parallel to the type of mask that is associated with the people of the Ivory Coast.

532 191 Aside from the decorated apinti drum, only some of the workaday art forms of Africa—combs, paddles, mortars, among other such objects—were retained. For their decoration the designs that in Africa had been cut into the base of figures or about the borders of masks had been remembered and reinterpreted in terms of the ancestral cults. And from those memories the Bush Negroes had developed the unique art which is theirs.

532 187 84 Thus, in the main, the art was symbolic, and many of the designs represented the urge for reproduction. Some stemmed from the fertility cult, though not entirely of it. There was, for example, the double-bladed food stirrer, which was given by a man to his wife with a curse woven [626] into its curves for the woman if she committed adultery.

532 There were carvings that did not deal with sex at all. On the lower river we sat on the shore as a canoe came up. Prow and stern were carved. On one of the seats was a representation of the head of a feline, done with the utmost realism.

"You have *tigri?*" we asked the man, as we bargained for the seats.

"I will sell you this, but do not ask me what it means."

[501] The bird-headed paddles were also examples of this kind. When laid on their sides, they showed the form of the parrot, or whatever bird they represented—the exaggerated beak, the head, the neck, the wings, and the feet. The [791] design called *Alukutu folo*, an emblem of those who could see into the future, was engraved on many benches on the upper river in particular, and these carvings were parted with only with the greatest reluctance, lest we try

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

The blacks are proud of their water skill. Upsetting a canoe 484
or drowning a passenger are disgraces that no man can ever 648
live down. But they are rare occurrences. The Indians of this 501
part of the continent, not nearly so skilful, use a different
style of canoe and paddle. Djuka paddles are hewn with a
bush-knife from a solid plank of hard wood, and finished off [322]
with an ordinary pocket-knife. The handle is frequently
pierced with delicate ornamental work, the entire piece beautifully balanced to handle easily. The men's paddles are as tall as they are, but the women's are shorter and more elaborate. Tiny ones are given children as soon as they are big enough to hold them, so that the Djuka's water skill is the result of a lifetime on the river.

All the boats are dugouts; no canvas or bark canoe would 396
last long in these rapids. They are manufactured out of big [501]
trees, which are felled and allowed to season. Then the centres are hollowed out with fire and adze; nothing is left but the shell of the trunk, with perpendicular sides and a rounded bottom. This is filled with water, into which hot rocks are dropped. The heated water softens the wood, enabling thwarts to be thrust in, forcing the gunwales apart. The ends are then symmetrically curved up and are often carved. Seats, as well as bow and stern pieces, are often carefully decorated. The entire boat has a distinct West African style. When com- 501
pleted it is from eight to forty feet long. Ours has a large [17] ●
sunshade of thatched grass near the stern, because the white 648
man is too soft to endure the sun's rays. Under the shade we have a camp-chair, a little comfort for the long trip. The

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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their arrival is frequently anticipated. But it is something of an exaggeration to say that this primitive telegraphy is so extensive and efficient as to spread news of the white man over "more than two thousand square miles of impassable land." Nothing of the sort happens. The sound of the drums will carry for about two or three miles, when the wind is in the right direction, and the drum call is relayed from town to town. Most often, however, they are not beaten at all for us, and we arrive unannounced.

At the landing we are met by Captain Abaisa, a splendidly built Djuka whose friendship was obtained on a previous trip. His powerful body is all cut up with ornamental scars, a form of personal decoration highly esteemed by the Bush Negroes. The custom is a direct heritage from West Africa, found in many parts of the Gold Coast, the Congo country, and Cameroons, but unknown among the Indians of the Guianas. Abaisa greets us cordially: *"You wicki bah?" "E-e ah, matti"* is the proper reply. This talkee-talkee greeting, the equivalent of "Did you wake well?" is chanted rather than spoken. The voice ascends sharply on the second word, the final word being drawn out in a high sustained tone. The reply means "Yes, friend."

Another form of greeting is *"Ah broko baka,"* or "The day breaks again"—in other words—we meet again; or *"Neetee kaba"*—"The night is finished."

If a person is met for the second time within a short interval, the proper thing to say is *"We meetee baka."* Still another greeting is *"Bala, (Sis, Da, Ma) odio, how fa you de*

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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Carved Calabash Gourds Used as Plates. *Saramaccaner Tribe*, Upper Surinam River.

Kahn-Granger Collection, American Museum of Natural History. Photo by Herbert Heller

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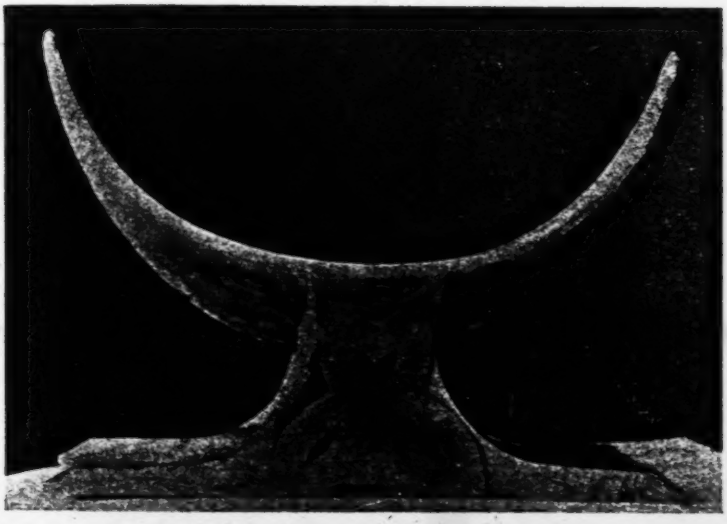

A Bush Negro Stool, Three Feet Long, Known as "Lebba Bangi" (Moon Stool), Taking Its Name from the Moon in the Crescent Phase. *Saramaccaner Tribe*. Stools of almost the identical nature are found in the Ashanti region of West Africa. This motif is probably one of the most striking West African Survivals.

Photo by Herbert Heller

[Facing p. 80]

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

751 778 calls them *obeiahs*. An obeiah is a charm or a form of magic to be distinguished from a *trafer*, which is a taboo. Obeiahs may be worn in the form of bracelets or necklaces, called *boe*. Bush Negroes never start out on a hunting or river trip without a number of boe around the arm, or leg, or neck. Thus the machinations of the evil spirits are set at naught.

One boe which Abaisa made for us is formed of heavy wire wrapped with white cord and set with cowrie shells. Worn on the arm, this will make you very strong. The charm will protect you while engaged in dangerous doings, such as [431] drinking river water after someone has been drowned in it. Abaisa made this bracelet out of friendship. It was given, not purchased; therefore the old-time gods are not offended at its being possessed by a white man.

[702] He presented it with great solemnity, taking a mouthful of rum and spitting it on the ground as a libation to the ground god, then squirting another mouthful over the bracelet. After that we all had a swallow of the same liquid and [553] Abaisa said a prayer in deepee-talkee. A somewhat similar ceremony attended the giving of a Djuka name to the white man—*Abentee*, provider.

751 321 778 The cowrie shells with which the obeiah is set are smeared with pemba dotee. The clay closes up the openings of the shells, thus preventing evil spirits from entering into the interior. These cowrie shells, which decorate practically all the [71] magic emblems of the Djukas, are commonly found among the savages of Africa, both on the East and West Coasts. They are also common in African art work, and at one time constituted a form of currency, papa moni.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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538 The Djukas possess, in common with many other primitive tribes, a number of trickster stories. They are called *anansi-stories*, and are usually concerned with the adventures of a clever spider, who outwits all the other animals. They resemble closely the Br'er Rabbit tales of the Negro of the
● [171] southern United States. These are West African themes, and can be found not only in the Carolinas and in Surinam, but scattered also throughout the West Indies. In the middle of the last century a collection of these stories was made among the Town Negroes of Paramaribo.

173 As most primitives possess no writing materials or technique, their knowledge is necessarily passed on by word of mouth, which imposes a severe limitation upon its possible extent. History, for the Djukas, starts with the rebellion, and of what came before they know little and care less. If they have stories of the Creation, we did not hear them. One approach to written language is in the Aucaner nation, where
212 a few rudimentary symbols are carved on paddles or other implements, a form of symbol-writing (see Appendix B).
[431] The implement is given to someone as a token of affection, the symbols constituting a greeting. Some of them may be seen in the illustrations of small paddles and pot-stirrers.

202 For communicating over a long distance, the Djukas use
[177] a system of drum telegraphy. This they have brought over from their West African homeland. At the town of Biodoti the news of our expedition was sent upriver by being drummed out on a tomtom. Squatting over the reverberating *apenti*, the Djuka buck rapped out the peculiar rhythm that

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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202 In communicating by means of a beached canoe, instead of a series of long and short beats, the drummer will imitate the pitch and rhythm of a spoken sentence. By striking in different places along the gunwale of the boat, tones of different pitch can be obtained, which mimic the sharply modulated intonation of spoken words in talkee-talkee. The listeners match the sounds with the words that they suggest. The device is too difficult to be widely used, but seems to serve well in emergencies.

551 The method of naming people among the Djukas is extremely curious. There is a superstitious fear of mentioning certain names among them. This is very probably of African origin. In slavery days, no Negro, when passing an estate, [552] would dare to mention its name until the estate had been passed. When we went over a falls in the river, we could learn its name only after the danger spot had been passed.

For personal names the Djukas have one which everyone may use and another which depends upon the day of the week on which the individual was born. This latter can be learned only after explicit inquiry and often not at all. There is also the secret name that strangers seldom know, if ever. [171] This custom of secret names is also prevalent among the Surinam Carib Indians and other primitives.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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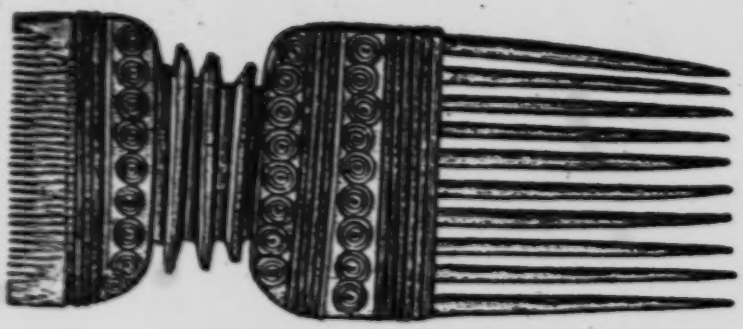

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[171]

Chapter Eleven

WEST AFRICAN SURVIVALS

FROM the Moors, the Spanish and Portuguese learned of the existence of the black races inhabiting the land of Africa. Recent archæological investigations have indicated that great Negro civilizations once flourished where the Sahara Desert now stretches its interminable sands. The drying up of the country helped cause the decay of these mighty empires, and Timbuktu today is almost forgotten. The final blow to Negro culture in West Africa was administered by the slave trade, in which thirty million blacks were either exterminated or transported across the ocean. The first cargo of slaves to the New World was landed in Haiti in 1502, and from then on increasing numbers of slave ships plied the Middle Passage with their squalid freight.

The Dutch, having won their freedom from the yoke of Spain, looked with envy upon the prosperous slave trade. In

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a [For caption, see category 116, p. 204, - Analyst]
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2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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The ornate combs used by the Bush Negroes are a most direct West African heritage, being found along the Upper Guinea coast, Ashanti, Cameroons, Ivory and Gold Coasts, Dahomey, Muni, and many other regions of Africa. The wooden plates and trays are likewise found among the Ewe-speaking tribes of the West Coast.

The custom of personal decoration by the cicatrization of the skin is very common throughout many parts of Africa. Captain John Stedman remarks on this strange habit in his *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition to Surinam:* "The Loanga Negroes distinguish themselves by puncturing or marking the skin of their sides, arms, and thighs with square, elevated figures something like dice." This custom was widespread on the Slave Coast. The scar designs varied widely according to the different tribes as well as the social position and wealth of the individual. As the Indians of South America do not practise this cicatrization, it is evident that the Bush Negroes brought it over with them from their former home.

The Bush Negro coiffure, the method of arranging the hair in plaited tufts, is found also on the Gold Coast, in Cameroons, and elsewhere in Africa. The Djuka method of weaving is similar to that of the Sudan, Gold Coast, Mandingo, Ashanti, and the Ewe. The spindle used in weaving is called by an African term, *kyekye,* a Tshi word. The woven leg band, the *sepu,* is the same as the leg bands found in Cameroons and the Upper Guinea coast in general.

The method of finding out who is responsible for the

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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But when the necessities of life have been provided for,
and leisure is at hand for more beautiful and tender endeavours, the Bush Negro, seated before his evening fire, sharpens his knife and begins marking, with fine, deft lines, the graceful outlines of another paddle or comb to please his woman.

List of Carvings Shown at Chapter Openings with Explanation of Symbolism

Carved Bench Top, *Saramaccaner Tribe:* Eight Women Dancing Around a Gadu Pole (title page)

Carved Bench Top, *Boni Tribe:* Stylization of Male and Female Figures (page 3)

Hair Comb, *Aucaner Tribe* (page 7)

Carved Pierced Bench Top, *Saramaccaner Tribe:* Two Male Figures Each Holding a Snake Aloft (page 27)

Carved Bench Top, *Saramaccaner Tribe:* Two Highly Stylized Human Figures (page 39)

Hair Comb, *Aucaner Tribe:* Male and Female Snakes (page 53)

Carved Bench Top, *Boni Tribe:* Vulva Surrounded by Phallic Symbols (page 63)

Carved Inner Surface of Calabash Gourd, African Bone Motif, *Saramaccaner Tribe* (page 83)

Carved Bench Top, *Saramaccaner Tribe:* Frog Design Executed with Serpentine Technique (page 91)

Hair Comb, *Aucaner Tribe:* Vulva Motif; the triangles on the cross bar represent snake teeth (page 119)

Hair Comb, *Saramaccaner Tribe:* Male and Female Figures (page 133)

Carved Outer Surface of Calabash Gourd, *Saramaccaner Tribe* (page 161)

Comb from Nigeria, West Africa (page 175)

Hair Comb, *Saramaccaner Tribe* (page 193)

/139 cont./

13 seems too high to me), the ants can bring into the soil each year two to three tons of leaf material per hectare. As a result the soil would be so enriched with humus and, in addition, through the construction of the numerous nest corridors, receive so much extra ventilation that the oxygen content and the microbiological condition of this soil would tend to differ from the mineral soils in which the virgin-forest is rooted. As proof of this, it is stated "that even the oldest ant-kapoeweri directly behind the villages shows no tendency to grow into normal high forest" (p. 13).

114 137 136 It does not seem correct to me to ascribe this kapoeweri phenomenon only to the presence and the activity of the leaf-cutting ants. In my opinion the ants here constitute a troublesome contributing factor, for when the virgin-forest grounds are abandoned by the population and no new food material is available to the ants while the kapoeweri gradually grows into higher forest, then the balance in the ant population re-establishes itself. This process takes place at a slow rate, depending on the local circumstances, but it leads to the re-establishment of the original situation. There is, however, one condition connected with it, namely, that the forest be left in peace for a long enough stretch. 241 134 Now this last is not the case for the grounds area of the Bush Negroes. They return too soon (within ten years) to clear grounds again, with the consequence that the soil becomes too exhausted and the recovery of the forest becomes impossible.

● 171 241 137 [136] Proof for this viewpoint is already provided by Stahel (loc. cit.) in his consideration of the agriculture of the upland Indians. The absence of the ant-kopoeweri there is not a matter of a lesser ant infestation, as Stahel /140/ believes -- for in places this is equally serious -- but of a less intensive use of the forest lands. [161] [423] [361] The Indians are present in small numbers (a few hundred, as against thousands of Bush Negroes), while only communal plots are laid out for one village, and not different ones for each family. In addition, the Indians move frequently in order to find new hunting and fishing grounds.

/143 cont./

433 The solution of this problem in my opinion lies in this, that in the first place agricultural methods which are based upon a better and more economical use of the land must be practiced. It is the task of the Department of Agriculture to investigate which possibilities the lands permit and which crops can best be cultivated; it is for this reason that to these observations is added a list of crops presently in use among the Bush Negroes. A small team of young Bush Negroes will have to be trained by the Agricultural Information Service to familiarize them with the new methods.

Next to that, combating the ants will have to be seriously taken in hand in conjunction with the plans for a modified agriculture. For this, too, people from the area itself will have to receive training, and a permanent work-team will have to be formed. It is unfeasible and unnecessary to clear the entire area now in use. Insecticides such as carbon sulfate, methylbromide, and parathion -- applied with the necessary caution -- could be used with success in places.

/144/ The District Administration will also have to provide co-operation in order to find a compromise between the customary laws of the Bush Negroes and the new regulations to be introduced concerning the use of land.

7. The Cultivated Crops and Their Use

241 Although for the most part the cultivated plants are those [171] generally in use as agricultural crops in Surinam, there is still not [114] much known in detail concerning the crops that are cultivated by the Bush Negroes for their sustenance. Giving a general survey of these plants is thus necessary first of all, with a report on the way in which they are used.

[174] From a more historical point of view it is of interest to point to a number of important plants that are of African origin and have only still remained in use among the Bush Negroes, such as [177] agobo and bongila. Furthermore presumably there are still varieties of ordinary cultivated plants present here -- such as sugar cane, bacove and bananas, species of tajer and yams -- from the

/6 cont./

133 Flooding is very variable according to the configuration of the rivers and the nature of the terrain.

133 At the Creole village of Grigel, situated at the bottom of
361 a glove-finger loop of the Waki River, the June flooding reaches
● 171 a level of eight meters above the average level in the dry season; the Creole and Indian villages of the Waki are established on hills. On the contrary, along the Lawa whose course is rectilinear, the variation in level is seldom greater than four meters. The maximum water level is 50 centimeters to one meter /above/
[342 the soil of the alluvial terrace. Several of the Creole and Boni
484] villages of the Lawa are even established at the very edge of the great river; the houses are built on piles and their occupants go home by boat during several weeks of the year. Nevertheless, most of the villages and farming habitations are outside the reach of flooding on terraces situated about five meters above the high-water mark, which are found from place to place at the edge of the river and which perhaps mark vestiges of an ancient terrace. This is notably the case with Boniville and Loka villages.

137 The whole of the territory is entirely covered by equatorial forest: a forest continuous and dense which extends over hundreds of kilometers without a village, without a clearing, without a trail.

The Guiana forest is less high than is ordinarily thought. It is an infinite succession of trees of all dimensions and of extremely varied species, among which true giants are rare; the average height of the cover is around 30 meters, and large trunks are rare.

824 The variety of species is very great; and the useful ones, few in number and dispersed, are difficult to exploit. The Refugee Blacks, who have a deep knowledge of the forest and its resources, utilize scarcely ten species out of the some 200 which they differentiate, judging the others unusable either because their

/8 cont./

241 177 experience of the American Indians, which seem the only utilizable ones in the interior of the country.

Thus these populations which are so varied have in large measure the same agriculture and the same food.

241 [262] Basic crops are manioc, consumed in the form of couac (flour roasted and granulated) which is the base food, the Indian yam, and tubers analogous to taro (dachine, "Caribbean cabbage"). [171] The Refugee Blacks plant mountain rice in addition. The Creoles do not plant rice but have on the other hand a greater variety of vegetables and fruits.

311 36 182 Men in Guiana live on the rivers; villages and cultivated lands are to be found on their banks; everywhere else one finds only the deserted forest; only Creole gold miners, constrained by their work, sometimes establish their villages far from watercourses.

181 182 171 The Refugee Blacks, like the Indians, love the rivers where they find, along with water and light, the possibility of moving without hindrance; they are a people of canoeists; their traditions are widely influenced by life on the river, and their mode of living finds in this a deep originality.

131 133 182 171 In fact, setting aside the gold miners' villages, we can say that the populations of the Guianas living by exploitation of the natural resources of the country have a linear habitat: it can be estimated not in surface but in length, for it is limited to a band of one kilometer along each watercourse accessible to pirogues. These watercourses are limited in number, for one can take for granted that at a distance of some 20 kilometers from the source of each river, the congestion caused by fallen trees and parasitic vegetation prevents easy movement.

[161] [226] Actually, considering the very low density of the population, the small rivers are scarcely utilized except as fishing places.

489 501 All the rivers are interrupted by falls and rapids which render the use of large boats impossible. The pirogues of the Refugee

/17 cont./

162 —On the Lawa a group of a little less than 680 persons is
103 settled on the French bank (villages of Agodé (Boniville), Asisi,
361 Loka, Tabiki (l'Enfant Perdu), Iapé (La Paix), and Papaïston).

—In proximity to this grouping subsists under Dutch control the village of Kotika (Cottica), grouping about 150 persons.

—In the region of Abounasounga two small groupings live in symbiosis with the Djuka. Finally, in the lower course of the Maroni exist three villages: Apatu, Ma Imma, and Wétiti. The whole represents about 150 persons.

361 These villages are stable: Kotika, Lapé, Asisi, Kormotibo
182 were already in existence at the beginning of the 19th century
[175] and their names figure in the report of the Franco-Dutch border mission of 1861; by contrast, farming habitations are moved according to the necessities of agriculture and fishing; thanks to this organization, a relatively numerous grouping can, in the interior of Guiana, in spite of conditions imposed by the geographical environment, conserve complete stability and a firm attachment
• [171] to the ground. It is useful to compare this organization with the basic instability of the Indians of Guiana, for it shows very well that this instability is ascribable to psychological and sociological factors and not at all to the geographic environment.

101 The Boni designate themselves by the term Aluku nēnge. The meaning of this word is forgotten. It is possible that Aluku was the name of an ancient chief, or of the founding ancestress
[613] of a lineage. On this subject it is to be noted that the name of the most ancient ancestress known of the Dju lineage, who can be thought of as living at the end of the 18th century, was called
[175] Aluku. This name has been used since the origin of the tribe;
[103] indeed one reads in the interrogation of the woman prisoner conducted in 1847 by the French at Oyapok that her village was called Loukou (1).

/21 cont./

602 613 614 191

1. This conception of kinship is also found among the Agni of the Ivory Coast and the Fon of Dahomey; it may be widespread in Black Africa, especially in populations with matrilineal filiation.

601 602 613 614 284 571 /22/ This conception, associated with that of the kunu, conflicts with the fractioning of lineages on the religious plane, even when a scission has taken place on the plane of residence. The rigor of the principle laid down, the quasi-mathematical transmission from one generation to the next of appellations based on rank relative to the foundress, prohibits the thought that elements foreign to the lineage can be integrated into this system by any process whatever. Nevertheless, a doubt remains as to the possibility of assimilating fragments with paternal kinship, for in paternal kinship the same principle of classificatory kinship rules, and the same appellations are used. We shall show that such a process of assimilation actually exists on the social plane, but that it is inconceivable on the religious plane, the kunu always being transmitted by the mother. /Fig. 3 appears here./

602 613 614 Knowledge of genealogical ties is very variable from one lineage to another. Outside of the great splits like Dipélu I-Dipélu II, we have demonstrated that small fractions of several lineages could no longer be attached to the main trunk, the genealogical ties being irremediably lost. The people concerned had never realized this; they had never wondered about it. This was the case particularly:

—With Samma's descendants (Dipélu II, Asisi);

—With the group of Atili's descendants (Lapé, Boniville).

[198] In both cases the split was very recent; old men dead for only a few years knew the genealogical ties now lost.

174 /30 cont./

613 1st. Lo = de facto grouping of rebels of any provenance,
614 which has in the long run split up into lineages but which remains
621 in the form of a common worship;

571 2nd. Lo = lineage, from the very beginning.
184

Conceptions Relative to Kinship and Marriage

769

[121] Ties between the individual and the ancestors. Before examining more deeply the social and family structure of the Refugee Blacks,
[184] it is indispensable to study what religious ties are implied between the individual and the ancestors. Here one is in the presence of basic beliefs which seem identical in the various tribes of Refugee Blacks of Guiana and of which their structure is the consequence.

In the civilizations of Blacks Africa it is supposed that a
[171] current of life and /31/ strength circulates from the divinity to men through the medium of the ancestors. Among the Refugee Blacks it is taken for granted that in this respect each man is bound
[782] to his ancestors through the maternal line only. If he falls prey to illness, injustice, or adversity, he can call only on them in his prayer.

593 That does not mean that the tie with the father is ignored
[827] or considered as having little importance; it is taken for granted, as we shall see, that in the creation of man certain psychic elements are transmitted from father to son. But the current of strength binding the individual to the ancestors does not pass through the father. One cannot pray usefully to the soul of one's dead father.
[755] If I am sick and divination incriminates the action of my dead
[782] father's soul, I cannot address either prayer or offering directly to him; for that I shall have recourse to one of his near relatives in the maternal line.

614 /31 cont./
769 Another very important principle in the minds of the Refugee
796 Blacks is that prayers must be collective; the principal ceremonies,
613 such as the New Year's prayer, must bring together, at least in principle, the total lineage.

These notions certainly have influenced the custom of the
182 Refugee Blacks with respect to residence and marriage. The lineage
613 cannot allow the permanent departure of a woman from her native
614 country any more than that of a man. In the populations of Black
591 Africa with matrilineal filiation, this conception is reconciled
• [171] with the necessities of practical living in the following manner: the wife leaves her relatives to settle down with her husband, but when her children reach adulthood they must return there. Thus one cannot attribute to this preoccupation alone the special system of marriage among the Refugee Blacks, which does not involve the permanent cohabitation of man and wife. We shall see that this system was inspired by social and psychological necessities. But concern for the unity of the lineage, to which it corresponds perfectly, has surely contributed to make of it a rigorous principle of customary law.

601 Kinship within the matrilineage. The kinship terms translate a
613 purely classificatory system. It depends only on the number of generations separating from the foundress. The sons of women
611 descended from the foundress in uterine line are regarded as members of the matrilineage and united in the system of appellation. The children of these men are no longer part of the matrilineage.

/69 cont./

562 828 [171] It is assumed once and for all that women are shrews on whom one cannot count and from whom one can get nothing. The Refugee Blacks are inexhaustible on this subject and their opinion about the women of their group is very similar to that of Africans in general: they call them ill-natured, devoid of feeling, selfish, greedy, and unfaithful.

562 571 [965] In general, women are held apart from regular social life; no form of customary society of women exists. In the mourning ceremonies, which correspond to a veritable mobilization of the village, they play no role, except to prepare the meals.

562 787 794 Yet the women play indirectly an important role in the social life by way of the cults of possession. The Papa gadu gods so formidable have women nearly exclusively as bearers, and we shall see in studying the functioning of the kunu that they are the principal actors in this. Through this activity, which is exerted in arbitrary fashion on the outskirts of the institutions of regular social life, the women maintain around themselves an atmosphere of fear; it is not impossible that the functioning of these cults is influenced by the concern of the women to maintain their privileged position in the society of the Refugee Blacks.

562 157 Many women are charitable and have a certain generosity toward the members of their family, insuring the maintenance of the old men without resources. But their benevolence is essentially subjective and extends only to a small circle of personal friends and their nearest relatives. As soon as the elders appeal to them for a question of general interest, claiming to give them orders or even advice, they meet an attitude systematically malevolent and stubborn. /70/

[613] The lineage heads avoid giving them orders directly, for they run a strong risk of getting themselves insulted, as we have observed many a time.

/96 cont./
423 613 621 571 emigrating fraction possesses exclusive rights over the /agricultural/ land /terroir/ it forms. But it does not lose, at least in principle, its rights over its original land /terroir/."

The study of finages gives us still more important information concerning the exercising of rights of use:

241 423 613 621 /97/ Of 100 clearings examined, 81 follow the normal process according to which the woman has her clearing made on the land of her lineage (1). Of these 81 clearings, 14 had been made under conditions not made clear, 48 had been cut by the husband, 14 by a near relative (son, brother, exceptionally brother or son-in-law), five by the woman herself.

1. For the joint sector of Boniville, the inhabitants of the village were considered as users of rights without distinction of lineage.

In only five cases it is, on the contrary, the man who brings his wife onto his lineage's land.

A little more frequent is the case of a man cutting a clearing for himself on his lineage's land.

Finally, the case in which, for reasons of convenience, a member of a lineage asks to work temporarily on the land of another lineage is met twice. Thus this is an extremely unusual practice.

182 171 [179] Influence of the geographical environment on the social structure. These observations are to be compared with the ones that can be made about the Oayana Indians and the Indians of Guiana in general, living near the Refugee Blacks, in the same geographical environment and almost in the same way (let us recall that the Refugee Blacks borrowed the whole of their material culture from the Indians).

/126/

553 Let us remember simply that there is a clear tendency to choose the name from the paternal relatives of the child (1).

[197]

1. It is a general rule among the populations of Black Africa from whom the Refugee Blacks borrowed their main cultural traits, the patrilineal Fon and Yoruba as well as the matrilineal and patrilocal Agni and Ashanti. The persistence [198] of this custom among the Refugee Blacks tends to strengthen the patrilineal and patrilocal tendencies which were persisting among them at the time when their institutions were developing.

551 Apparently they avoid giving the name of a very old person or one recently deceased.

553 In this transmission of the name there does not seem to be anything other than a mark of affection toward a relative. No bond is created between the child and the adult whose name he bears. Obviously there is nothing in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks which requires the perpetuation of names and their transmission from the dead to the living.

[613] When they wish to give one of their children the name of a person of another lineage, they must ask permission of this person, who does not necessarily grant it (he may fear that his name might thus be borne later by a thief or a ne'er-do-well).

If he does give his permission it does not, strictly speaking, involve any payment, but he may be offered a small gift.

[613] There is no need of any authorization to take a name borne by a person of the lineage of the child's mother or father.

/131/

429 Recapitulation:

858 70% of the boys
613 85% of the girls are raised in the mother's lineage

27% of the boys
13% of the girls are raised in the father's lineage

3% of the boys
2% of the girls are raised by outsiders to both lineages.

429 It is important, moreover, to emphasize in what proportion
858 the children are brought up by women or men:
562

67% of the boys
86% of the girls are raised by women

33% of the boys
12% of the girls are raised by men.

429 This preponderant role of women in the education of the
562 children is one of the fundamental aspects of the social structure
577 of the Refugee Blacks. In fact, women consider that the children belong to them, and if they give some to men to bring up, it is
[171] only as many as they wish to. This conception which is found to be widespread among the Blacks of America, in the West Indies as in Guiana, explains, much more than the frequency of divorces, the impossibility for them to make up patrilineages in the absence of coercion exerted upon the women.

429 Several important pieces of information may still be drawn from these tables:

/140/

684 688 784 This prohibition is of a purely religious nature and does not entail any social sanctions; those concerned are convinced that in such a case a suprahuman sanction would strike them in the form of sickness or accident.

582 [613] Prohibitions limiting marriage. Outside of the great interdiction, pikadu, which is attached to unions within one matrilineage and one patrilineage, two prohibitions limiting marriage are found among the Refugee Blacks, which they express thus:

[595] [587] --I cannot have two wives at the same time in the same lineage. For example I am forbidden to marry two "sisters" at the same time, but if I break with my wife, I may marry her classificatory "sister" or any other woman of the same lineage;

[835] [587] --I may not have relations, even passing ones, with a woman who has been married to my brother by the same mother; in particular, if my brother has just died, I shall not be able to marry his widow.

[684] The Boni are not capable of explaining the deep reasons for these interdictions, but they interpret them as purely social and not religious prohibitions. The offender is simply threatened with being beaten.

[171] The first of these rules seems very widely accepted in Black Africa, as much in patrilineal societies as in a matrilineal system.

[171] The second of these rules is characteristic in the Akan (Agni, Baoulé) culture area and shows that the family custom of the Refugee Blacks is related much more directly to that of the Agni-Ashanti group than to that of the Dahomey.

184 587 114 One can note that this rule is exactly contrary to the Saramaka custom, which obliges the widow to marry one of the brothers of the dead man; this custom has been interpreted by several authors as coming from imitation of the levirate of the Jews, with which certain rebels were acquainted (it is known that among the slaveowners there were many Jews).

/158 cont./

848 If children are born of these irregular liaisons, the mother
[784] takes care to know with certainty who the father is, for if there
[753] were any doubt, the child, respecting a kina which would not be his own, would contract leprosy. On this subject the Boni
842 have a remarkable belief: they think that it is the first man with whom a woman has had relations after the end of a menstrual period who is likely to make her pregnant.

836 These adventures always involve gifts in kind (cloth,
431 jewels); so the men who have the most success with women are always short of money.

581 A woman who has lived thus in notorious fashion has a little more difficulty than another in finding another husband, but if she is young and winsome she succeeds.

548 Prostitution as such is very rare in Boni country, and the women who give themselves over to it openly (three or four for all the villages on the French bank) have generally left the
[836] tribe to settle in the gold miners' villages. Dissoluteness is not considered dishonorable by the Refugee Blacks when it is carried on within the tribe and when it has no other purpose but pleasure; but prostitution is judged shameful.

834 Except for these few prostitutes, we have never heard it
648 said that a Boni woman had relations with a European; on this point tribal discipline is observed with extreme rigor.

581 Conclusion. The average duration of marriages, which was
[178] from 15 to 20 years for the preceding generation, tends to become shorter and can be estimated nowadays at about ten years.
[191] In spite of this evolution, the stability of marriages among the Refugee Blacks remains noticeably greater than that observed
548 among the black populations of South America. Among them is not seen the form of prostitution so widespread in South America, the supported mistress who does not work and who lives entirely at the expense of her successive lovers.

/161 cont./

764 692 This tribunal is charged with establishing the causes of death and rendering a decision on this subject which has the force of law. But it is above all charged with judging the dead person, with determining whether he has lived worthily, whether he has the right to be buried according to the rites and to be invoked as an ancestor, or whether on the contrary he was a wisimã.

[613] [643] The grand man designates one or two lineage heads to preside over the council and "command" the dead person until the burial.

The grand man designates who will lead the assemblage and will "command" the dead person until the burial.

764 692 613 This cannot be the head of the dead person's lineage, for no one can at the same time be judge and judged.

Ex.: for Béniti (Dju) this was Popo — head of the Lapé lo

for Atikati (Dju) it was Kondoku — head of the Awara Bakka lo

for Kotoïda (Aw.B.) it was Tafanié — head of the Papaïston lo

for Way (Dip. II) it was Tafanié --- /162/

764 787 The 2nd and 3rd days after the death are given over to the interrogation of the dead person, which on the evening of the first day had scarcely begun.

[184] The rites of this interrogation vary from one village to another; in certain villages they begin to carry the dead man even before the construction of the coffin; the questions are not asked everywhere in the same fashion.

[171] The dead person is interrogated by methods widespread in West Africa and which are related to spiritualism: the coffin is carried on the heads of two men, feet forward. The dead man is supposed to push the bearers forward to say yes, and to make them nod their heads from left to right to say no.

/174 cont./

764 Children are buried with the normal ceremonies only from about the age of six on. The rule is the following: A child is buried in the cemetery and broko dɛ is done for him if the next child of the same mother is beginning to walk.

766 Young children are buried without a coffin at a special site on the edge of each village; a board is simply placed on the [828] body before filling the grave. They have the idea that very [795] young children have no vital force, and that their yɔrka cannot do any harm. /Fig. 25 appears here./ /175/

764 Mourning

After the burial the wives of the dead man (or the husband if it is a woman), the nearest relatives on the maternal side, as well as the children, sojourn eight days more in the mortuary shed, until the broko dɛ.

765 From then on the obligations of mourning are limited, [831] for the near relatives of the dead person, to abstaining for a [795] year from dancing, wearing jewelry or too fine clothes; it goes [771] completely otherwise for the spouse of the dead person; the Refugee Blacks indeed take for granted, like the Creoles of Surinam, the persistence of the sexual jealousy of the dead person, whose yɔrka is thought to remain in contact with the living for a year.

State of the spouse in mourning. The principle is that the surviving spouse, until the lifting of mourning, is subject to the will of the dead person. In order to materialize that in an obvious way, he cannot, during this whole period, wear his usual clothes but must dress exclusively in pieces of cloth appropriated for him from among the ones the dead person possessed, or given by the nearest maternal relatives of the dead person.

/192 cont./

791 171 [177] This is precisely what constitutes the great interest of the Refugee Blacks' religious forms, which one finds again, besides, in large measure, mixed with Christian ideas, among all the Blacks of South America. They seem to point out a very important common background of conceptions common to the West African civilizations.

791 174 184 It is certainly not by chance if the various tribes of Refugee Blacks have adopted such close social and religious forms. One must assume the action of several strong personalities who knew, with an almost superhuman instinct, how to sift out from the jumble of beliefs brought by the rebel slaves what was necessary to the life of the new society; but this new religion would not have taken root in forms so stable and so coherent if all had not been intimately conscious of being in agreement on a minimum of common concepts.

It is important to observe that the Refugee Blacks, who borrowed most of their techniques from the Indians and Europeans, remained rigorously faithful in their beliefs and rituals to the African substratum, from which they drew a homogeneous and [177] living whole. Although the beliefs of the Indians are known to them in their main lines, they have borrowed almost nothing from them; on the other hand, it is certain that vague Christian recollections influenced the conception they have of the supreme god, Masa Gadu, and their moral and religious law. But they have been introduced into an African system of thought, and in fact the beliefs which directly influence individual and social life come in a straight line from the African earth.

792 [171] Metaphysical conceptions. Through the rituals of the Refugee Blacks appear /193/ metaphysical conceptions very comparable to those which have been noted in the populations of West Africa.

/198 cont./
167 754 old woman of 90, A..., who died in Asisi in January, 1957. Having lived with Creoles in her youth, she had come back to live in her native village for at least 30 years and had never given occasion for any unfavorable remark. Nevertheless, upon her death it appeared that she had wisi.

791 829 179 Attitude toward Christianity. The Refugee Blacks, who are acquainted better than one might believe with the conceptions of the populations in the midst of whom they live, have a clear feeling of the relationship which exists between their metaphysical and moral conceptions and those of Christianity. They think they worship the same god as the Christians, in a completely different way but just as sound. They have no animosity [799] whatever toward the Catholic and Protestant clergy, and most of them agree willingly to wearing crosses or medals. But they have not the least intention of abandoning their beliefs for that. They do not perceive the contradiction and do not understand that people might want to oblige them to choose.

851 171 Like the Creole gold miners, they attach great importance to baptism, considered as an obia protective against the dangers of the bush. On Christmas, 1957 they were strongly impressed 165 799 by the accidental death of a Djuka Christian living at the Kotika school. He refused to observe mourning for his wife [688] according to the custom of the Refugee Blacks, and used to go [203] to drink in the cabarets of the Creole villages. On Christmas [784] evening, when drunk, he drowned himself. That was attributed to a suprahuman punishment. We heard /199/ the following reflection on this subject: "He was baptized and he drowned himself just the same. That is therefore not worth the trouble."

61 581 591 Actually, the matrilineal structure of the Refugee Blacks and their conception of marriage form an irreducible cleavage, which appears immediately as soon as one leaves the metaphysical conceptions to pass to the plane of practical living.

/199 cont./

581 The Refugee Blacks change their attitude immediately as soon as one speaks to them about marriage. Men and women are unanimous in considering marriage as an intolerable violation of individual freedom and as a tie without purpose; they talk about it with veritable indignation, even having the feeling of an offense against morality.

Cults of Possession

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794
[171] The phenomena of possession are extremely frequent among the Blacks of America (possession by saints or inspiration by the Holy Spirit among the Blacks of Brazil and the United States, voodooism in Haiti). With the Refugee Blacks they make up the very base of religious life to the point of being the normal means of communication between the gods and men; they have profound effects on all social life.

[171]

The cults of possession practiced by the Refugee Blacks of Guiana differ from those of the Blacks of Brazil and Haiti and do not appear to be directly connected with the African cults which have been described.

[128] We shall give here only very concise information about the ritual of these cults and we shall mainly try to show their place in relation to the institutions of the Refugee Blacks, and their functioning.

787 Possession is believed to be the entrance into a man of a suprahuman entity (divinity, spirit of an ancestor) which, during a variable length of time generally rather short (a few minutes to several hours), uses the body of this man and expresses itself through his mouth. They say that the man has become the horse - hasi - of the divinity. They also say: "Such-and-such a divinity entered his head." The possessed person is called [114] gadu mã (gadu umã for a woman). This word has been translated improperly as "priest" in the first works treating of the Refugee Blacks.

/199 cont./

[787] [191] The phenomena of possession exist among other populations of the Guianas and especially among the Amerindians, but among the Refugee Blacks they have special and well-defined forms.

--For the duration of possession, the ordinary consciousness of the man is totally abolished. When he comes back to himself, he no longer remembers anything and the others present [191] have to repeat to him what the divinity revealed. This total loss of consciousness during possession appears to be a very constant phenomenon with the Blacks, in Africa as much as in [114] America. Professor de Goeje calls attention to the fact that the Indian medicine man, on the contrary, does not lose /200/ consciousness during his trances and is supposed to receive, himself, the revelations of the spirits.

When a man is possessed by a divinity, in the eyes of the Refugee Blacks he is no longer there; what his body may do is not attributed to him at all. They say: "The gadu does this, says that, dances in such a way." If the gadu hurt someone (but that practically never happens) or broke something, its bearer would not have any responsibility.

[787] [198] [006] [176] --The divinity expresses itself in a language peculiar to it; we shall see further on that there are four categories of divinities likely to become incarnate in men, which corresponds to four secret languages of which in practice only two are known by the Boni, at least by the oldest among them.

The bearer of the divinity, in his usual state of consciousness, knows in general this language, which he has learned from a teacher if it is a matter of a possession desired by him and obtained with the help of definite practices.

But there are also numerous cases of unprovoked possession (in the kunu especially) and people state that in this case the divinity speaks its language just as well, although its bearer has never learned it;

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One also often finds as an avowed goal the idea of being useful to his lineage.

Disinterested mystical impulses appear totally absent from these cults.

But that is only one aspect of the phenomena of possession; they really seem to be, in large measure, unconscious and involuntary. Everyone can try to obtain a gadu, but everyone does not succeed; one must have a certain predisposition. "One cannot oblige a gadu to enter a man," say the Boni; it certainly seems, in fact, that in nearly half the cases possession takes place spontaneously and sometimes to the great terror of the person concerned: this is observed especially in the kunu.

Mimi, a woman about 46 years old in 1958, of the Kotika lineage, was possessed by two gadu, an Ampuku and a Papa gadu. Here is how her near relatives relate the fashion in which they came into her.

About ten years before, Mimi was showing signs of mental derangement. Her mind wandered, she sometimes used to leave the village to run in the bush at random, she uttered disconnected words (1). Then she fell very ill (pleurisy?).

1. It is necessary to note on this subject the very widely held idea among the Refugee Blacks, as among the Creoles, that certain forms of mental imbalance are due to the action of an entity which is trying to manifest itself in a man and does not succeed. In order to cure this man, he must be "washed" with appropriate leaves so that the god can come to manifest itself in him; the rest of the time he will be normal.

/207 cont./

153 791 787 The teacher has the pupil turn in a circle around the mortar in which has been prepared the infusion of leaves, until he is dizzy. Alternately he makes him turn and "washes" his body with the infusion. Possession occurs by itself at the end of a certain number of sessions.

276 [191] In the practices intended to make the gita of Kumẽnti "rise," the absorption of toxic substances enters, especially tobacco juice, method employed by the Indian medicine men. But once the reflexes are created, there is no further need for these substances; the gita appears as soon as the calling procedures are used, which are of two kinds:

--Personal procedures: The man voluntarily calls on his gita while putting on the god's costume and taking a certain posture;

--Outside procedures: The gita may be released from outside either by calling the god by name or by beating the corresponding rhythm on the drum.

787 158 When the pupil begins to feel the gita of Kumẽnti, that is first manifested by trances. We have very often been present at these attacks, which usually come on at night in the forest, but commonly also during the day. The one possessed suddenly lets go of the objects he was holding (for example, if he was in the process of eating, he drops plate and spoon), and rushes forward running through the forest howling rhythmically as if he had become an animal. His eyes are rolled upward, he no longer is conscious of his surroundings; he is not in any way threatening; these fits are totally inoffensive in spite of their [147] impressive aspect. One sees possessed people in this state do things which are difficult to explain, such as running in complete darkness in the most impenetrable underbrush without falling or hurting themselves, or climbing up in a few seconds on a craggy rock which would have been hard to scale in full daylight.

776 /209 cont./
wata Ingi. Indians of the water. In certain spots, people have
[778] [782] known since the time of the ancestors that there resides such a
Bũnsuŋki, whose name they know; when they pass there, they
address a prayer to it while making a sacrifice of tafia.

776 (The Bũnsuŋki must not be confused with wata mama, the
171 mama-of-the-water of the Creoles, a dreaded divinity but one
which the Boni do not appear to worship. The wata mama lives
at the bottom of deep holes in river beds and never allows her
face to be seen; she sometimes abandons one of her long hairs
on the rocks and he who finds it becomes rich).

776 /210/ The Bũnsuŋki can enter into human beings, exclusively,
787 it seems, into women. They give a different gita from those
[562] of the Kumẽnti. The possessed person dances at the edge of the
water, then swims and dives for a long time. They affirm that
[789] if its possession is sufficiently intense, the genie carries the
possessed woman along to the bottom of the water, where she
stays for a very long time without any harm! That is supposed
to have happened especially in Asisi village to a woman named
Dabisa.

Possession by the Bũnsuŋki is not frequent. In 1952 it
was known in Boni country in only three women.

[562] As for men, they may perceive these divinities in dreams
[788] and receive benefits from them. For that they go to the place
[782] where it resides and bathe, uttering an invocation: "O god,
watch over me, protect me, come to me at night when I sleep,
speak to me, act so that I may not be sick, so that I may get
rich." The following night, the divinity will come in a dream,
demand a sacrifice (beer in general), say that it /grants/
the prayer.

776 The Vɔɔdũ (1). These are gods much feared for their evil

1. This word is obviously a deformation of the Dahomey word vodũn.

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531 can read these messages; but we have not turned up any precise evidence on this subject (1).

1. These signs are very little systematized and have no relation whatever with the symbolic designs which figure in certain rituals of possession, especially in Dahomey and Haiti. It is permitted to see in them a simple likeness.

787 The Papa gadu are chiefly consulted to ask them to re-
[255] veal the cause of misfortunes that happen. One of them is not
[253] asked to cure an illness unless the interrogation reveals that it brought it on.

776 The worship of the Papa gadu snake gods makes a strong
648 impression on the West Indian Creoles who maintain regular relations with the Refugee Blacks. Most consider it as diabolical
[782] in nature and disapprove of it, but if the presence of an "adder"
[171] (anaconda snake) is noted in a neighboring creek, and if at the same time misfortunes occur, it happens that a Creole may go to ask the Refugee Blacks to practice rites to mollify
[778] the vengeance of the god. We have happened to catch sight of, hidden in a copse behind the habitation of a gold miner, a small altar decorated with blue and red pennants, the usual place of worship of the Papa gadu.

755 Observation in Boniville, November, 1952.
[789] An Asisi woman, Tini, comes to Boniville to consult her adoptive daughter Pamasa, about 35 years old, who is possessed by a Papa gadu named Adawa. Féni, 15 years old,
[164] Tini's son, has been sick for several days (fever, eruption all over the body). When someone comes to get us, the god has already entered into Pamasa, has sat down in a hut, and

787 824 /216 cont./

Aluku Name	Identification	Use
Sɛŋgaafu	Costus cylindricus (zingiberaceae)	cult of the Papa gadu and of the Ampuku
Malimbelimbe	Piper sp. (?)	----
Filli (Hɔligɔɔ)	Chamaesyae sp. (?) (euphorbiaceae)	----

828 Beliefs Concerning the Human Person and Its Development
Ancestor Worship

[171] The Refugee Blacks of the various tribes have precise and identical conceptions on this subject, which are found also, more or less mixed with Christian conceptions, among the West Indian populations of African origin. For them, man is formed of three elements: the body, the yɔrka which may be translated by personality, and a higher principle called akka.

[184] It goes without saying that among the Boni, who have not elaborated these conceptions and received them from the Djuka, [128] nobody is capable of discoursing on them. But numerous conceptions having to do with magic and to the relationships with the ancestors permit of rather reliable cross-checking.

774 The akka. It is not possible to translate akka (1) by soul in the sense we understand it. The akka is an immortal divine element

1. This word appears to be a deformation of kla (Agni-Baoulé), word to which a very comparable meaning is attached.

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If someone marries a girl, he must not only pay her mother the price of virginity but must also pay the girl's akka. For that he offers white beads and cloth which the bride will wear, as well as sweets which will be consumed by her. If the price of virginity were not paid, the woman's akka, humiliated, might make her sick or kill her. /218/

/218/ There are seven categories of akka, masculine and feminine, one for each day of the week.

Crevaux in 1877 was able to establish the complete list (1):

1. This conception is widespread in the Agni-Ashanti culture area, among the Ewé and Mina, and as far as western Dahomey. The names reported among the Mina correspond very exactly, except for some differences in pronunciation, to the ones kept by the Boni.

	Men	Women
Sunday	Kwasi	Kwasiba
Monday	Kɔdyo	Adyuba
Tuesday	Kwami	Abeniba
Wednesday	Kwaku	Akuba
Thursday	Yao	Yaba
Friday	Kɔfi	Afiba
Saturday	Kwamina	Amba

All these names are known to the Boni, but none of our informants was capable of reciting the complete list. It is well understood that a name like Kɔfi, Kɔdio /sic/, etc. is the akka's name and not at all the man's name (2).

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Relations between Gods and Men

The kunu

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The kunu. The Refugee Blacks call kunu the collective curse which has weighed on a matrilineage since an ancient offense. The kunu is without time limit, without pardon, without pity, blind in the choice of its victims; in principle, it can end only with the complete extermination of the lineage. Each time [753] [761] that adversity swoops down on one of its members in the form of death, sickness, various calamities, the kunu is the most frequently obtained explanation. The instrument of this inexpiable vengeance is either a god or the yɔrka (spirit) of a dead person.

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This notion, which occupies a central position in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks, does not appear to have been borrowed directly. Most of the populations of Dahomey /222/ and the Ivory Coast take for granted the idea of arbitrary punishments exercised upon the members of the lineage by the gods or the ancestors of the group. But no population of these regions has, to our knowledge, developed so highly systematized a doctrine.

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The conceptions developed by the Refugee Blacks, divinities impelled exclusively by vengeance, and especially ancestors inexorably chastising lineages other than their own, have created new relationships among individuals and among lineages.

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We have not been able to elucidate the origin of the word kunu. Perhaps it is a deformation of the Mina word ekunu, which means burial.

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Three categories of divinities can pursue men with their kunu, and because of this fact the Refugee Blacks feel toward them an extreme terror mixed with veneration.

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775 784 769 778 613 A yɔrka exercising a kunu may also demand that another smaller fraga tiki be erected for it beside the principal fraga tiki of its lo. In the villages of the Refugee Blacks one often sees these little crosses provided with white veils like the main fraga tiki, planted beside it a little obliquely.

775 784 674 The notion of the kunu exercised by a yɔrka explains the rarity of murder among the Refugee Blacks. How would you dare to kill someone when, as soon as it is freed from his body, his yɔrka will have full latitude to make you sick, to make tree branches fall across your path, to cause to suffer and to kill all those dear to you? If someone is blinded by hate, it is the idea of suicide which will dominate him. In October, 1952 we were able to observe this reaction in a man who had just been subject to a deep humiliation: "I am going to kill my body in order to go to kill that man and his whole family," he said to us, prey to a fit of rage; fortunately, when the fit had passed, he came back to a more sound outlook on things.

775 784 613 696 [171] It is to be noted that a yɔrka cannot exercise a kunu against its own lineage. This notion explains why, in the times when they exercised absolute authority, tribal chiefs had those condemned to death executed by men of the same lineage. Apparently similar practices were the rule in olden days in several African kingdoms, which allows one to think that notions analogous to those of the kunu may be rather widespread there.

784 613 Situation of the various lineages with respect to the kunu. There we touch on one of the most secret aspects of the social life of the Refugee Blacks. Years of living among them are necessary in order to obtain precise information on the nature and the mode of action of the kunu acting on the various lineages.

784 613 428 Nearly all the entities which now exercise their kunu on the Boni have been in their lineages since a very ancient period, to the point where the name of their first bearer is forgotten. They are transmitted inexorably from generation to generation. In the course of the ages, the kunu have accumulated, and now certain lineages are living with four, five, or even six kunu.

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754 He accused him of being an azemã (vampire) and of drinking the ox's blood. S..., answered nothing, which appeared to everyone obvious proof of his guilt. He untied his boat and went away. Since then everybody in Kotika avoids him; they abstain from accusing him personally in order not to become victims of his sorcery.

Agyémési affair. -- Agyémési, an old man of Asisi village (Awara Bakka) who died in 1953, was a solitary and morose man with odd ways. For a long time he had been accused by B... (of Loka) and by N..., a Djuka living among the Boni, of being a wisimã and of having made them sick. He had even [695] been accused before the grand man, had denied it, and the grand man according to usage had told him: "We leave to God [167] the ,ob of punishing thee if thou art guilty." Agyémési, in order to flee his persecutors, had settled in the Indian village of Aloïké.

His accusers insisted to people of his lineage that he be brought and publicly interrogated. A... and P... were sent, who went to get him by making him believe that the council of the Awara Bakka lo, putting an end to a long dispute, had decided to name him captain as the doyen of the lo. Without [695] mistrust, he followed them to Asisi. He was received by his accusers who insulted him tumultuously, without, however, there [154] being any blows. The poor man remained speechless, which appeared to all to be the obvious proof of his guilt. He took to his bed and five days later he was dead (1).

1. The Refugee Blacks are so suggestible that the sole fact of seeing oneself cursed and abandoned by all must bring on a psychological shock capable of bringing death. Similar cases have been observed in Africa.

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754 [683] only commonplace illnesses or accidents of some sort. We have never heard poisoning, in the usual sense of the term, mentioned.

754 695 182 The wisimã trials are in our opinion the most unpleasant aspect of the civilization of the Refugee Blacks. But it must be admitted that they correspond to profound necessities. These archaic societies need an obvious materialization of the principles they have given themselves. Since evil exists, opposing itself to good, the practices of wisi and wisimã exist, and the punishment of evildoers is indispensable for the society to remain subject to the law of good.

[984] By its notion of the kunu which turns aside toward the gods the responsibility for most misfortunes, by the extreme rarity of wisimã trials, by the prudence of its judiciary action which in point of fact pursues only the dead, the society of the Refugee Blacks shows itself humane and realistic.

If one undertook with the Refugee Blacks definite action to make these practices disappear, one would risk obscuring their notion of good and evil and removing all efficacy from their customary law.

[183] The social order of the Refugee Blacks cannot be maintained if the interdiction of harming anyone and the interdiction of vengeance do not remain clearly laid down. It matters little that these acts of sorcery are without real content: It is the intention to harm which counts, with all its social and psychological consequences.

171 177 182 754 When one observes the Creole populations of the Guianas and the West Indies, even though /244/ they have been under the influence of Christianity for several centuries, one is struck by the development of sorcery and by its repercussions on the whole of social life. The teaching received at school and from the catechism, which embraces white magic and black magic in a single reprobation, has greatly contributed toward making these populations lose the principles of social morals of their ancestors without in exchange modifying their

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171 image of the world. Since magic practices are rejected by
177 religion, since it even denies their reality, one does not think,
182 when one finds oneself constrained to have recourse to them,
754 of transferring to them the notion of good and evil which it teaches. Black magic gets in almost inevitably because a person believes he must defend himself; then its use becomes habitual, and the two forms of magic end up by mixing together and being no longer regarded as fundamentally different from each other.

171 Cases of wisi and Boni customary law. In African villages,
754 cases of sorcery are interpreted by interminable and useless
695 discussions, wild accusations, protestations of innocence, sometimes more or less sincere confessions, oaths and legal tests with always contested results. These cases are never finished; they are in permanent evolution, sometimes for months and years. Opinion moves successively onto different hypotheses according to events which take place, seeking its way gropingly like a man lost in darkness.

754 It is clear that the first lawgivers of the Refugee Blacks,
695 by carrying judgment back to the death of those concerned and
182 by refusing the wisima any kind of pardon or compromise, tried to prevent the development of these sad crises. What is the use of discussing interminably, since there is no certain proof, and since nobody may confess? But customary law collides on this point with tendencies too deep to be entirely restrained. The laws of Odun are not always obeyed to the letter, and it happens sometimes that the Boni lose their footing in the
[571] observance of their customary law. Then crises take place among them, as violent and confused as in the villages of Black Africa, going as far as paralyzing social life for several weeks; then peace returns for several months, sometimes for several years.

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464 776 decision of the god and under some pretext or other refused to resume work. In August, 1952, while we were on a work trip /en mission/, an ɔbiamã made it known that an Ampuku was willing to give a tapu, that is, an ɔbia of protection, against this Papa gadu. We were present at a discussion in the course [465] of which several Boni planned to take up this work again, but asking for raised wages to cover the expenses of the ɔbia (1).

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1. Situations of this kind are common in the Guianan forest, even among Creoles. For difficult or unusual work, the high wages demanded serve in part to remunerate magicians.

751 435 791 These expenses amounted to about 5,000 francs per person, or:

--3,000 for the payment of the god, including red cloth, dark-blue cloth, white beads, beer, rum, cowries; the ɔbiamã would take them to set them out in the forest.

--1,500 for payment for the work of the ɔbiamã, including a piece of canvas /toile/, beer, a container /bidon/ of powder, a chicken.

751 The remedy would consist of an infusion of leaves with which one should "wash one's body" morning and evening for the duration of the work.

As for the Creole foreman, he prudently had himself assigned to another job.

751 776 They have the habit of asking an Ampuku for protection against a Papa gadu and conversely (we have cited an example of this above), but they do not ask a Kumẽnti for protection; the Kumẽnti occupy themselves only with illnesses.

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751 Renewal of the power of the ɔbia. The Refugee Blacks have
789 the idea that no magic power can last if it is not renewed by formulas and offerings appealing to the god from which it came.
[824] Each year, at variable dates for each ɔbia, one must renew the power of the ɔbia by dipping the support object into a maceration of certain leaves. This renewal may not take place on January 1. On that day all leaves lose their power. /252/

[768] Mr. W. F. van Lier writes that among the Djuka, objects (bracelets, etc.) serving as support for a magic remedy are thrown away upon the death of the owner for they have lost
[184] all power. The Boni do not have this conception; with them,
[428] these objects keep their value for the dead person's son provided that before dying he voluntarily transmitted them to him by giving him mula.

789 Transmission of ɔbia. An ɔbia is often bequeathed simultaneously
428 to a son and to a nephew. Care is taken not to lose the ɔbia
613 for the lineage. Thus it is that certain lineages have certain ɔbia as their specialty.

789 Kãndu. The Refugee Blacks call kãndu a magic object intended
[171] to protect property (houses, harvests) against theft. This procedure is also very much used by the Creoles.

There are three common kinds of kãndu:

--Piiti tiki kãndu. It is made of a split stick stuck into the ground, in the slit of which dry banana leaves or small sticks are placed horizontally. This device originated in Dahomey.

--Sikopu kãndu. It involves a shovel stuck into the ground in front of the house (the idea of the shovel is associated with the idea of death, for this instrument is used particularly in digging graves).

--Bɔɔ kãndu, made up of a bow and arrow planted in the ground.

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841 Woman's magic power. The Refugee Blacks assume that a woman, during her menstrual periods, is impure and has the power to destroy the power of ɔbia. So during these periods she must withdraw into a special hut, munu ɔsu, and prepare her meals in special dishes; she may not prepare her husband's food, for by doing this she would destroy the power of his ɔbia, and must abstain from touching objects he habitually uses, particularly his gun, which would lose its good points for shooting. Even in the little farming habitations which consist of only several huts, one may be sure that one of them serves as a munu ɔsu.

841 343 462 [465] The munu ɔsu are very simple sheds built by the women themselves, using reclaimed materials taken from huts being demolished; some belong to one woman only; for others, three or four women get together. They have recourse to men only for assembling the framework, remunerating them with several cans of couac or several baskets of yams.

841 /255/ A man who has a powerful ɔbia like the man nɛ̃ŋge ɔbia must abstain from speaking to a woman who has her menses.

[751] The Boni assume there are women wicked enough to willfully hide their menses in order to destroy the power of a man's ɔbia, but he who has a good man nɛ̃ŋge ɔbia cannot be a dupe: the iron circle warns him of the danger by squeezing his arm.

184 841 68 According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, the act of willfully hiding her menses is for the Djuka one of the gravest offenses a woman can commit, and the most severe punishments are inflicted on her. It is not the same with the Boni: in such a case a woman risks only being insulted and banned.

752 834 171 Another deeply rooted belief among the Refugee Blacks, and which exists with many Creoles, is the necessity for the

752 /255 cont./
834 Obiaman who treats a wound made by a firearm to observe
[171] chastity during the whole duration of the treatment. It is for this reason that the Boni hesitate to have gunshot wounds cared for in hospitals.

784 Kina. The interdictions of the Refugee Blacks generally have
[262] to do with food. There are five categories of them to our knowledge:

[753] --Bwasi kina, basic kina, mark of patrilineages, the breaking of which gives leprosy;

--Akka kina, often called gadu kina, established by divination and believed to be imposed by the akka;

--Gadu kina, mark of possession by a divinity;

--Obia kina, interdiction attached to each object involving a magic power, and which must be observed for this power to last;

--Finally, local kina, particularly the kina dɛ, days of rest, going back to the idea of the day of rest of the local divinity. They observe, for example, that the Mana River has a kina dɛ on Sunday. The Saramaka observe it strictly. The Boni we took on the Mana in 1949 went to find out from the Saramaka, and asked us to stop navigation on Sunday,
[648] for this kina was very urgent. It is noteworthy however that the Boni bow in such circumstances before the will of the Europeans, as with respect to their own kina dɛ of Friday; in effect they are assuming that if they are ordered to be on duty, it is the European alone who bears the responsibility for breaking the kina.

[428] It is possible that the kina alluded to by Mr. W. F. van
[114] Lier and which, among the Djuka, would be imposed on a
[613] whole matrilineage are also local kina; in any case no kina is transmissible through the mother, all the Refugee Blacks are explicit on that point.

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842 992 A few weeks afterward she found herself pregnant, and it seemed obvious to all that this was the doing of a Wata Ingi.

845 No magic power is attributed to the tone pikin, any more than special mental or physical characteristics. But it is assumed that they are the object of a special protection, and that they cannot be harmed with impunity.

771 789 435 The sacred character of payment. Relations between the gods and men always have the character of a bargain, among the Refugee Blacks: an irritated divinity is never appeased by repentance or good will; it requires that it be paid; likewise, an obia is of value only for the person who has paid for it. Refugee Blacks will never utilize ready-made magic recipes: uttering certain words, making certain gestures; face to face with such a recipe they will ask immediately: "From what [972] god does this obia come, and whom must one pay?" It seems that in their conception every transference of a spiritual power or a magic force disturbs something in the proper functioning of the universe; payment restores this equilibrium, it is the [711] mark of legitimacy. Some Creoles of African ancestry transpose the same idea with respect to Christianity, and this is /258/ why they insist so much on paying for masses and buying 759 558 "orisons" (1). One observes likewise that free medical care

1. Written prayer to which is attached protective power. This notion, borrowed from the rustic magic of 17th-century France, seems to have been introduced into Guiana by the first European colonists.

lowers the prestige of the doctor in the eyes of all.

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241 778 People who have no farming habitation and who farm on the outskirts of /Fig. 29 appears here/ /261/ residence villages get together in groups of three or four to establish a worship place in a copse preserved from the forest adjoining their clearings.

241 782 Cane juice, syrup, rice pounded fine but not cooked are offered.

They make this offering at the time of the plantings, saying, "Gadu, please come and eat a little, watch over us, thank you very much."

The Boni who observe the rites most faithfully renew this offering each month at the new moon.

If someone has two clearings in two different sectors, he performs the rites twice, each gɔ̃ gadu being entirely independent of the others.

241 171 On this subject one notices that the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks are much more systematized than those of the Creole populations of African origin in the West Indies. They do not think each field has an individual soul; neither do they apparently believe in the possibility of capturing the soul of the field in order to make the neighbor's field sterile out of revenge. These beliefs, which play such a large role in the popular magic of the West Indies, seem to be without exact counterpart in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks.

241 [176] Interdictions and various rites. Cutting a clearing involves great dangers: it is necessary to avoid injuring the maleficent divinities of the bush, which have as supports well-defined plants and animals, by brutal destruction of these supports, and their wreaking inexorable revenge -- the kunu -- on the lineage of the unintentional sacrilege. It is therefore necessary to seek out these plants and animals and to carry out for each the rites recommended by the ancestors' experience without forgetting a single one. No Refugee Black would dream of

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824 778 789 the tree: "Ala sani di de na a udu ya, da mu kumɔto, beka mi ɔ faa ɛŋ. Kɔm na a pina tɔŋgo: All things (suprahuman entities) who are in this tree, leave it, for I am going to throw it to the ground; come into this palm leaf." One takes away the palm leaf and the little flags far from there into the interior of the lands, to a spot where nobody is likely to come to fell trees, and one arranges them beside some big tree. The divinities will come and settle there. Nevertheless, it is still necessary to wait almost a month to cut the katu tree, probably to leave the maleficent influences time to dissipate.

824 778 [781] [1171] The Boni are so afraid of this tree that many of them, deeming these precautions insufficient, give up the idea of cutting it down and go to establish their clearings elsewhere. The Creole gold miners of the Haut Maroni, who call it cottonwood, also attribute a maleficent influence to it and some of them do not cut it.

The Refugee Blacks fear also, but to a lesser degree, what they call kɔtkɔti, that is, the small trees of any species which, instead of having grown straight, have two angles in their trunk like a Z. This is a very rare anomaly. In such [1176] [1184] a shrub is hidden a maleficent entity, taku sani, capable, if a man cut the trunk unintentionally, to take revenge on him by paralyzing a limb or even the whole body in a bent position. In order to see whether or not the entity is present in the shrub, there exists, according to the Boni, a very simple means: one gently brings the finger near the bent part. If he feels his finger held there to the point where he has trouble drawing it back, the genie is present! The power of autosuggestion characteristic of the Refugee Blacks shows itself clearly here.

[1189] Rites exist for rendering the kɔtkɔti harmless, for cutting them with impunity, and even for using them in magic preparations, but we do not know the details. Kɔtkɔti are among the objects usually found in the chapels (ɔbia ɔsu) of Kumɛnti; we have even happened to see one used to fasten a

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[765] audience and to create an atmosphere of participation in the rite.

This ritual character makes it so that the Anansi Toli cannot be recited any time and in any old way. The story-teller may speak only at night, in the presence of a respondent and of an audience of at least two or three persons. A ritual formula: "dirinti" -- the response of the audience: "ndaeti," precedes each new story. It is only with extreme repugnance that informants consent to listen to and comment in the daytime on a tale recorded on tape, particularly if their parents are still living, for it is said among the Refugee Blacks as in Black Africa that telling stories in full daylight makes one's father and mother die.

[124] [126] [961]

These tales belong to an authentically African accumulated store, practically unchanged in spite of the borrowing from the Creole Blacks of Paramaribo of several themes concerning automobiles, steamboats, etc., inserted in droll fashion into the traditional themes.

[174] [179]

The usual hero of these tales is Anansi, the crafty one. Anansi is the name of the Mygale spider (1). It is noteworthy,

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1. The spider cycle is characteristic of the Akan (Agni-Baoulé-Abron) culture area. Anansi is the name of the Mygale spider among the Agni.

however, that this spider does not appear to play any special role in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks and that no divinatory power is attributed to it. In fact, in the tales of which he is the hero, Anansi is nearly always represented as a man.

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*539 big boat avoided him. Anansi paddled toward it, paddled until... gbo! (collision) the small boat sank. Anansi in the water shouted: "You have drowned the king's child, give back to me, give back the king's child to me quickly, if not, Whites, who are in that ship, you and I are going to die!(1)"

1. Obvious contradiction with the beginning of the tale where it is said that in those times the country of the Whites did not exist. But none of the listeners appears to worry about it.

They stopped the big boat. They hoisted Anansi on board. They fished out the small boat, but did not find the dead child.

The Whites told him: "We do not find the king's child. What must be done to finish up this business?" He said: "Give me the big boat." They acquiesced.

He went back up the river with the big boat. He arrived at the pier of the king's village. Anansi shot off the cannon. On land, they fired the cannon too. Anansi was received triumphally, the king's daughter put a ring on his finger, and they were married. Thus it was that the king had a steamboat.

9) Pikinbaya (2)

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2. This tale is a theme of the Creole Blacks of Paramaribo.

There was a woman; she had a child whom she named Pikinbaya (3). One day she gave him food to take to the market

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3. The name means "little comrade."

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771 The Boni, as we have shown, do not feel that they are pagans. They think they worship the same god as the Christians, in a different way but just as valid; they feel that their moral principles are not inferior to those of the Christians, that they are expressed in practice by the same prescriptions and are in fact better obeyed(2).

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2. We report here faithfully the point of view of those concerned without making any judgment of its worth; let us recall that their principles of living do not assume any moral conscience in the individual and rest entirely upon the fear of material punishments in the present life. But even this base gives them great practical effectiveness.

829 Only in their conception of their kinship and the family, in the absence of family life based on the indissolubly united couple, do they recognize that they live under another law. But they do not fail to notice that the populations of the Guianas who profess Christianity hardly put it into practice in their family life: the stability of marriages is appreciably greater among the Refugee Blacks.

787 776 828 As for the cults of possession, the Boni feel that they worship de facto entities whose existence appears as tangible to them as light or weight to us. These ideas are bound up with a characteristic way of perceiving, touching deep zones of the mind which reasoning does not reach (3).

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3. Actually, it is observed in Black Africa that where cults

6:Hurault--477 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

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of possession exist, the populations are particularly impermeable to Christian influence. Apparently destroyed, these cults soon reappear in another form, sometimes in Christian guise (possession by the saints).

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Let us add that one of the great strengths of the custom of the Refugee Blacks is the privileged position it gives to the woman. Women, shielded from the direct influence of Europeans and Creoles, and besides practically inaccessible to all reasoning, are hostile to changes which would infringe on their privileges. Now it is they, in fact, who have the education of the children in their hands.

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Thus it does not appear possible to "assimilate" these populations by destroying their original culture. The attempts inspired by fanaticism for civilizing will have as their only result its impoverishment, pushing the Refugee Blacks to dissimulate their beliefs, to abandon their art, costume, songs, and dances, all that makes up their joy in living. But the social structure based on the fear of ancestors and gods could be destroyed only by violence. We may hope that nobody thinks of coming to that.

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As for us who have lived a long time in the midst of the Refugee Blacks, we feel a deep esteem for them. By their historic past, the originality of the customs they have developed, the good relations they have been able to create with the other populations, they have proved their creative abilities; they deserve to be allowed to evolve in their own way. /blank page/